

# Greenwich Public Schools 2015 - 2020 Strategic Plan



Personalized learning...  
driving student  
academic, personal  
and interpersonal growth



# Mission

It is the Mission of the Greenwich Public Schools

To educate all students to the highest levels of academic achievement;

To enable them to reach and expand their potential; and

To prepare them to become productive, responsible, ethical, creative and compassionate members of society

# Vision of the Graduate

The Greenwich Public Schools are committed to preparing students to function effectively in an interdependent global community. Therefore, in addition to acquiring a core body of knowledge — which is established in local curricular documents reflecting national and state standards as well as workplace expectations — all students will develop their individual capacities to:



## Academic Capacities

- Master a core body of knowledge
- Pose and pursue substantive questions
- Critically interpret, evaluate, and synthesize information
- Explore, define, and solve complex problems
- Generate innovative, creative ideas and products



## Personal Capacities

- Be responsible for their own mental and physical health
- Conduct themselves in an ethical and responsible manner
- Recognize and respect other cultural contexts and points of view
- Pursue their unique interests, passions and curiosities
- Respond to failures and successes with reflection and resilience



## Interpersonal Capacities

- Communicate effectively for a given purpose
- Advocate for ideas, causes, and actions
- Collaborate with others to produce a unified work and/or heightened understanding
- Contribute to community through dialogue, service, and/or leadership



The Greenwich Public Schools (GPS) 2015-2020 Strategic Plan is designed to drive academic, personal and interpersonal growth by providing personalized learning opportunities for each student. Personalized learning provides customized learning paths, anchored in a standards-based curriculum, for each student, giving them meaningful choice in their learning options based on individual strengths, needs, and interests.

The Strategic Plan is organized in support of achieving three Strategic Goals established by the Board of Education in June 2015 to ensure academic, personal and interpersonal growth. Subsequently, GPS administration developed crosscutting strategies and action plans for achieving each of the goals. In summary, the strategies are designed to...

- Provide individual access to digital and traditional resources
- Create effective management and progress-monitoring structures
- Provide access to standards-based, rigorous and relevant curriculum
- Provide professional learning and expand instructional expectations for teaching and learning in a digital learning environment
- Establish a comprehensive social-emotional learning program
- Establish standards for parent and community engagement
- Implement an information and data management system



...which specifically support personalized learning.

Please explore this brochure and our website to learn more about the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan. The Board of Education and District Administration would like to take this opportunity to thank the many voices of the Greenwich community that contributed to the development of the Strategic Plan. We heard from public and independent school parents, GPS administration, teachers and staff, students, and community organizations and businesses. We received valuable insights about areas of strength upon which to build as well as areas of focus for improvement. These insights have been incorporated into the 2015-2020 Greenwich Public Schools Strategic Plan.

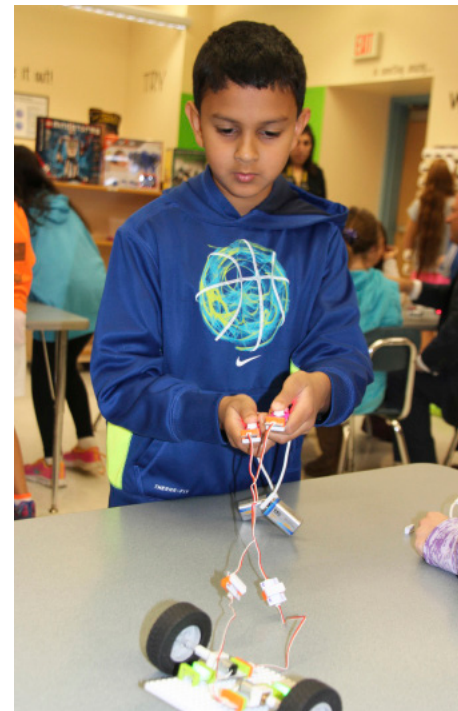
# What is Personalized Learning?

## The Theory of Action for the 2015-2020 GPS Strategic Plan

In June 2015, the Board of Education established three Strategic Goals (p3) to ensure academic, personal and interpersonal student growth. Based on stakeholder feedback and staff strategy development workshops, four key strategies and related action plans have been developed in order to achieve the Strategic Goals over the next five years. The overarching Theory of Action that links these strategies and actions plans is to create personalized learning opportunities for every student. Personalized learning is the provision of a customized learning path, anchored in a standards-based curriculum, for each student that gives meaningful choice in what, where, how and at what pace s/he learns based on individual strengths, needs, motivations, interests, goals, and cultural background.\*

The Strategic Plan Action Plans provide structures, curriculum, professional learning, educator evaluation indicators, social-emotional learning and engagement programs and standards, technological systems, and resources to support personalized learning.

- The District must be organized to support the theory of action - personalized learning. Strategy 1: Leadership and Management (p7) focuses on establishing structures for maintaining focus and monitoring progress on the prioritized strategies and action plans, including an online strategic dashboard for tracking success metrics aligned to the Strategic Goals.
- Students and educators must have easy access to a rigorous and relevant standards-based curriculum and understand what it means to personalize the learning experience. Strategy 2: Curriculum and Instruction (p8) focuses on developing cohesive, well articulated, and accessible curriculum that aligns to digital tools and resources. In addition, the Strategy 2 action plan concentrates on steps to build teacher capacity to plan personalized learning opportunities for all students.
- Strategy 3: Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and Family and Community Engagement (FaCE) (p9) endeavors to create systemic standards to support the individual student, provide opportunities for external supports, and build essential linkages between home, school and community.
- Access to comprehensive and real-time data to gauge student progress and growth is an essential element in a personalized learning experience. Strategy 4: Data and Information Management (p10) will center on developing a data warehouse and management system that permit easy access to current and historical academic, personal and interpersonal progress measures. In addition, growth models will be developed to follow performance trends and set targets for each student.
- In addition to the four strategies established to achieve the Strategic Goals, the Greenwich Public Schools' implementation of a Digital Learning Environment (DLE) (p6) provides the foundation for personalized learning.



\*working definition of "Personalized Learning" for the Greenwich Public Schools

# Strategic Goals

During the 2014-2015 school year, the Board of Education engaged stakeholders - GPS administration, teachers and staff, students, public and independent school parents, and community organizations and businesses – in a dialogue on planning for the future of the Greenwich Public Schools. After considering feedback from individual interviews, focus groups, a community forum, and a stakeholder survey, the Board of Education’s Strategic Planning Leadership Committee established three Strategic Goals. In June 2015, the Board of Education adopted the three Strategic Goals as follows:

## ACADEMIC GOAL

To ensure each student achieves optimal growth within the core academic disciplines based on multiple variables



## PERSONAL GOAL

To ensure each student develops the capacity to be responsible for his or her own physical and mental health



## INTERPERSONAL GOAL

To ensure each student demonstrates growth in personal development and civic responsibility



Upon approval of the Strategic Goals, District administration began to develop strategies and actions plans over the summer and through the Fall of 2015 for addressing academic, personal and interpersonal growth for every student. The Strategies and action plans outlined in this document, including the foundational strategy for implementing a Digital Learning Environment, are designed to impact each of the three Strategic Goals.

# Creating a Digital Learning Environment ...a foundation for Personalized Learning

The implementation of a Digital Learning Environment (DLE) in the Greenwich Public Schools is designed to advance the transformation of teaching and learning and to accelerate the academic achievement and personal well being of all students. The first year of the Strategic Plan (2015-2016) coincides with Phase III of the DLE implementation and is the first year that all students and all educators received personal devices.

## What?

The DLE initiative provides the professional development, technological tools, online resources, and infrastructure necessary for teachers to both innovate and differentiate instruction according to the needs of each student and for students to personalize their own learning, making choices about how they learn and present new knowledge.

## Why?

The District is implementing the DLE to give teachers and students the tools to personalize learning and to achieve the level of rigorous instruction required for successful implementation of the Connecticut Core Standards and, ultimately, to prepare students for college and career.



## How?

- Provide professional learning for teachers on instructional practices which support personalized learning, using digital resources and training on new technologies
- Secure and deploy personal devices to all K-12 students and all educators using a phase-in model.
- Implement a Learning Management System for course/class communications and sharing instructional resources
- Identify and secure digital instructional resources (a.k.a. Digital Toolbox), a standard set of applications, aligned to K-12 curriculum maps, including a Digital Citizenship course.
- Establish the technological infrastructure to support internet access for large-scale deployment of personal devices

# Strategy 1: Leadership and Management

Personalized learning is achieved through strategic leadership and management.

## What?

Strategy 1 focuses on configuring the organization's operational and academic structures to meet the needs of students. Beginning with District administrators, the focus is to establish structures that enable effectively leading the implementation of the Strategic Plan.



## Why?

Deliberate, effective leadership and management strategies are essential for large-scale and transformative change. Educator Michael Fullen – recognized as an international authority on organizational change in schools – notes in his 2011 monograph that effective organizational transformation requires that leaders:

- foster intrinsic motivation of teachers and students,
- engage educators and students in continuous improvement of instruction and learning,
- inspire team work, and
- affect all teachers and students.

## How?

- Establish and optimize management structure/s for the implementation and progress monitoring of the Strategic Plan
- Develop and internalize a systemic definition of personalized learning
- Focus priorities on initiatives and practices that support personalized learning
- Develop a Strategic Dashboard – an online, comprehensive success measurement system
- Ensure stakeholder awareness and support through communications messaging campaign
- Evaluate progress and refine the Strategic Plan



# Strategy 2: Curriculum and Instruction Action Plan



Personalized learning is achieved through standards-based, rigorous and relevant curriculum that is aligned to digital tools and resources.

## What?

Strategy 2 presents two distinct, but related approaches through which to achieve the Strategic Goals – curriculum and instruction. The curriculum action plan will focus on steps to create and communicate a cohesive and well-articulated PreK-12+ curriculum. The instructional action plan focuses on steps to build teacher capacity to plan personalized learning opportunities for all students.

## Why?

An accessible standards-based, rigorous and relevant curriculum clearly establishes and communicates what students should learn at each grade level. A well articulated personalized professional learning plan and rigorous standards for educator evaluation aligned to curriculum ensures the delivery of instruction necessary to provide personalized learning opportunities for students.

## How?

- Develop and renew written PK-12+ Curriculum
- Develop and implement trans-disciplinary units of study
- Establish a comprehensive assessment system based on multiple measures
- Revise/expand the TEPL Teaching and Learning Indicators to reflect district expectations for teaching and learning in a Digital Learning Environment
- Distribute and communicate GPS Curriculum Services and Management Plan to support implementation and annual renewal of the written curriculum
- Provide personalized professional learning to support a rigorous and personalized learning environment for students





# Strategy 3: Social-Emotional Learning & Family and Community Engagement

Personalized learning is achieved through the implementation of a comprehensive Social Emotional Learning (SEL) framework and enhanced Family and Community Engagement (FaCE).

## Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

### What?

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to:

- understand and manage emotions,
- set and achieve positive goals,
- feel and show empathy for others,
- establish and maintain positive relationships, and
- make responsible decisions.<sup>1</sup>

### Why?

Social and emotional skills are critical to being a good student, citizen, and worker. Many risky behaviors (e.g., drug use, violence, bullying, and dropping out) can be prevented or reduced when multiyear, integrated efforts are used to develop students' social and emotional skills. This is best done through effective classroom instruction, student engagement in positive activities in and out of the classroom, and broad parent and community involvement in program planning, implementation, and evaluation.<sup>1</sup>

### How?

- Build on District Norm activities that engage students, staff, families and community in public, positive, pro-social behaviors
- Identify components of school-based programs that lead to a decrease in disciplinary incidents and an increase in positive behaviors
- Evaluate effectiveness of current programs and pilot additional programs and resources

## Family and Community Engagement (FaCE)

### What?

Family and Community Engagement (FaCE) is a collaborative partnership between families, schools and the greater Greenwich community advancing an environment of meaningful communication, support and outreach that provide opportunities for all stakeholders to maximize student academic, personal and interpersonal growth.

### Why?

"Parent, family, and community involvement in education correlates with higher academic performance and school improvement. When schools, parents, families, and communities work together to support learning, students tend to earn higher grades, attend school more regularly, stay in school longer, and enroll in higher level programs."<sup>2</sup>

### How?

- Establish consistent engagement standards and expectations for all schools in the following broad categories: Welcoming Environment • Communicating Effectively • Supporting Student Success • Advocating • Sharing Responsibility • Partnering with Community
- New responsive design website, providing easier navigation and improved access to information
- Re-establish an annual stakeholder satisfaction survey
- Provide professional learning and resources for staff in engagement strategies, cultural competencies and customer service

<sup>1</sup> Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) <http://www.casel.org/social-and-emotional-learning/>, 2015

<sup>2</sup> National Education Association (NEA) Policy Brief, 2008 (PB11), NEA Education Policy and Practice Department

# Strategy 4: Data/Information Management

Personalized Learning is achieved through systemic data and information systems that gauge progress on student growth for academic, personal and interpersonal success.

## What?

A data management system provides educators with a resource for compiling assessment data, in warehousing, reporting and dashboard formats, enabling ease of access and the opportunity to gauge meaning from the data.

## Why?

In order to best plan for personalized instruction, educators must have easy access to student data any time, anywhere, and a clear understanding of how to interpret data. The development of a growth model based on a student's past performance, provides an opportunity to project future academic expectations in order to guide personalized learning opportunities and plan instruction accordingly.

## How?

- Build the backend data management system
- Establish a secure data warehouse
- Develop a student performance growth model
- Provide professional learning on how to use data to personalize and drive classroom instruction
- Provide access to real-time data to support individualized learning



# How will we measure success toward achieving the Strategic Goals?

The Board of Education and District administration are working with a data warehousing consultant to build a Strategic Dashboard, providing a high level view of key metrics for monitoring progress toward achievement of the Strategic Goals.



## ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

- **Academic Success Metrics**  
Strategic Dashboard success metrics for the academic goal will monitor key indicators, including the degree to which students have met or exceeded CT standards in core curricular areas, and in expected growth, as well as preparedness for college.



## STUDENT WELL-BEING

- **Personal and Interpersonal Success Metrics**  
Strategic Dashboard success metrics for the personal and interpersonal goals will monitor indicators, which could include, students' physical fitness, well-being, engagement in school, and/or participation in athletics, extra-curricula activities and/or community service



In addition to the success metrics, the Strategic Dashboard will also provide an opportunity to track the implementation of each action plan for the Strategy areas.

The Strategic Dashboard is expected to be operational by August 2016.

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